

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-12 (canceled) without prejudice.

13. (Currently Amended) A die system for producing multi-segmented filaments comprising:

a polymer source maintaining a polymer under predetermined rheological conditions;

a die in communication with the polymer source, the die maintaining the polymer under predetermined rheological conditions; and

a die plate in fluid communication with the die, the die plate defining a first group of openings, the first group of openings comprising a first opening and a second opening,

the first opening and the second opening configured to form at least two elementary polymer filaments,

the first opening and the second opening sized, shaped, and positioned to accommodate and account for the polymer in the die and the rheological conditions that the polymer is being maintained under in the die, such that polymer exiting the first opening of the die plate exits as a first bead and such that the polymer exiting the second opening of the die plate exits as a second bead, the first bead and the second bead contacting one another after exiting the respective die openings of the die plate further configured such that a bead of the polymer material exiting a die opening in the group contacts with at least one other bead of polymer material exiting another die opening in the group.

14. (Previously Presented) The die system of claim 13 further comprising:

a second polymer source in communication with the die.

15. (Currently Amended) The die system of claim 13 wherein the die plate defines a second group of openings, the second group comprising a third opening and a fourth opening, the third opening and the fourth opening configured to form at least two elementary polymer filaments,

the third and fourth openings sized, shaped, and positioned to accommodate and account for the polymer in the die and the rheological conditions that the polymer is being maintained under in the die, such that polymer exiting the third opening of the die plate exits as a third bead and such that the polymer exiting the fourth opening of the die plate exits as a fourth bead, the third bead and the fourth bead contacting one another after exiting the respective die openings of the die plate further configured such that a bead of the polymer material exiting a die opening in the second group contacts with at least one other bead of polymer material exiting another die opening in the second group.

16. (Currently Amended) A die plate system for producing multi-segmented filaments comprising:

a die plate having a first opening and a second opening, the distance between the first opening and the second opening being equal to or greater than a quarter of the sum of the diameters of the first opening and the second opening and the distance between the first opening and the second opening being less than or equal to two and a half times the sum of the diameters from the first opening and the second opening,

the die plate in fluid communication with a die containing a polymer under predetermined rheological conditions,

the first opening and the second opening of the die plate sized, shaped, and positioned to accommodate and account for the polymer in the die and the rheological conditions that the polymer is being maintained under in the die, such that polymer exiting the first opening of the die plate exits as a first bead and such that the polymer exiting the second opening of the die plate exits as a second bead, the first bead and the second bead contacting one another after exiting the respective die openings of the die plate further configured such that polymer from the die exiting the first opening forms a first bead and polymer from the die exiting the second opening forms a second bead, wherein the first bead and the second bead are in contact with one another.

17. (Currently Amended) A die plate system for producing multi-segmented filaments comprising:

a die plate having a first opening and a second opening, the distance between the first opening and the second opening is equal to or greater than a quarter of the sum of the

diameters of the first opening and the second opening and the distance between the first opening and the second opening is less than or equal to the sum of the diameters of the first opening and the second opening

the die plate in fluid communication with a die containing a polymer under predetermined rheological conditions,

the first opening and the second opening of the die plate sized, shaped, and positioned to accommodate and account for the polymer in the die and the rheological conditions that the polymer is being maintained under in the die, such that polymer exiting the first opening of the die plate exits as a first bead and such that the polymer exiting the second opening of the die plate exits as a second bead, the first bead and the second bead contacting one another after exiting the respective die openings of the die plate further configured such that polymer from the die exiting the first opening forms a first bead and polymer from the die exiting the second opening forms a second bead, wherein the first bead and the second bead are in contact with one another.

18. (Withdrawn) A multi-segmented filament comprising:

a first elementary fiber having a skin; and

a second elementary fiber having a skin;

wherein the first elementary fiber is connected longitudinally to the second elementary fiber by adhesion of the skin of the first elementary fiber with the skin of the second elementary fiber.

Claims 19-20 (Canceled) without prejudice.